(a) whether Government has lifted the ban on export of wheat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether lifting of ban has resulted in reduction in rising prices;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the further steps Government proposes to take in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) and (b) In pursuance of the Empowered Group of Ministers decision dated 5/3/2009, the Government had vide Notification No. 115-(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 3rd July, 2009 lifted the ban on export of wheat, for export of 3 lakh MTs each through MMTC, PEC and STC upto 31/3/2010. However, keeping in view the progress of Monsoon and the need to conserve foodgrain stocks within the country, the decision was reconsidered by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and the permission allowed for export of wheat through MMTC, STC and PEC was withdrawn vide Notification No. 117(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 13 July, 2009.

(c) and (d) The lifting of ban vide Notification No. 115-(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 3rd July, 2009, or the withdrawal of export permission vide Notification No. 117(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 13 July, 2009 did not have any impact on domestic market price situation.

(e) The Government is regularly monitoring the situation and would take appropriate need based measure.

Upgradation of Bilimora-Chikhli-Vansda-Waghai-Ahwa-Chinchli road in Gujarat

*370. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gujarat Government has submitted a proposal for upgradation of Bilimora-Chikhli-Vansda-Waghai-Ahwa-ChinchliRoad;

(b) if so, the current status of the proposal; and

(c) by when the proposal is likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) This Ministry has not received any such proposal from Government of Gujarat for declaration as National Highways. Due to resource constrants, priority is being given for development of roads already declared as National Highways instead of declaring more roads as National Highways and as such, there is no proposal to declare any new National Highway in Gujarat at present.

Joblessness due to global economic meltdown

*371. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of job-seekers in the whole country as per records of the employment exchanges in different States of the country;

(b) among these job-seekers, how many are having professional qualifications;

(c) the number of persons turned jobless during 2008-09 and 2009-10 on account of global economic meltdown and recession; and

(d) the course of action Government proposes to pursue to rehabilitate those who lost jobs in the country?